Armenia is a country with rich history and traditions in agriculture and a variety of ethnically-unique food products that it offers on both local and international markets. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, most of the specialists for the country’s food industry and related governmental offices received their education at several specialized food technology educational institutions located in Russia and in Ukraine. Now an independent nation, Armenia does not have a single university within its borders that can provide an in-depth education in the areas of food science. The presented challenge is much larger than a current lack of educated specialists and the absence of appropriate educational institutions.

Clearly, there is a need for future generations of Armenian specialists who will not only advance their country’s food industry, but will assist governmental offices in the proper design and implementation of food laws and regulations at the level of international standards. Based on educationally promoted developments in the food industry and the establishment of internationally-accepted food laws, the Armenian food industry will provide the country’s population with safe and healthy food by implementing advanced technologies and methods for controlling food safety. In turn, this will assist in the creation of new jobs in the food industry (private sector), governmental institutions and academia. In total, these developments will boost the country’s economy and will help its products reach international markets.

With this in mind, we propose to initiate a Food Science department and degree in Armenia located at Agrarian University. This project’s initiation received support from the Office of Congressman Pallone, the Founder and Chair of the Armenian Caucus in the U.S. Congress, and from Dr. Shavarsh Kocharyan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. The Armenian Ministry of Science and Education gave its permission for the project’s development. Under the leadership of Dr. Hovik Sajadyan (Yerevan State Agrarian University) and Dr. Michael Chikindas (Rutgers State University), a group of specialists was assembled to coordinate this project.